OVC 6004

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THE YIDDISH DREAM

A heritage of Jewish song

sung by Herschel Bernardi · Shoshana Damari · Netania Davrath · Leon Lishner · Jan Peerce · Martha Schlamme ·

Vu is dus Gesele
Sha—Shtil
Yome, yome
Chiri bim
Roszinkes mit mandlen
Tum ba la laika
Reizele

DESIGN JULES HALFANT

AFTER A PAINTING BY MARC CHAGALL

Partisan Song
A Volachl
A dudele
Tumba tumba
Anniversary Waltz
Oifn Pripitchek
and others
including songs from
Fiddler On The Roof

VANGUARD CLASSICS

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Like Jews themselves, Yiddish folk song has flourished as an integral part of world culture, drawing from it and contributing to it, growing firmly under conditions of intense poverty and persecution, and speaking always of tenderness, love and the universal human desire for freedom to grow and develop. Always it speaks of the people's intense love for life as well as their conditions of life.

In this wealth of folk song—which has many compositions that have become part of the world's folk heritage—there were three great periods of fresh growth. One is the eighteenth century Chassidic movement in Europe, a revolt against medieval ritual formalism in its dancing joy and visionary, almost personal, attachment to God. It also marked the first hesitant lifting of Ghetto barriers. The second grew in Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth century, echoing the struggle against vicious pogroms and joining the movements for social awakening. The texts speak of small towns, the shtetls, but the outlook is anything but small, for its eyes are on humanity and freedom. The third is of immigrant Jews to America, bringing their love of music and musical heritage, and finding roots to grow in the new world.

1 VU IS DUS GESELE (traditional) is one of the most haunting songs of the Jews in Russia in the nineteenth century; it proceeds like a slow, nostalgic waltz. "Where is the little street, where is the house, where is the maiden who stole my heart? Alas, it is all gone . . . "

2 SHA, SHTIL is by Pinchos Jassinowsky (1886-1954). It evokes elements of the Chassidic tradition: the laughter, dancing, throwing off misery, and adoration of the Rabbi who is the friend of the Almighty. "Hush, quiet, don't make any noise, the Rabbi is about to dance, and when he dances, it reverberates in heaven."

3 YOME, YOME (traditional) is a tender song from Eastern Europe. The mother asks her daughter, Yome, "Why are you sighing? Do you wish for a new dress, a pair of shoes, a new hat? The finest seamstress, cobbler, milliner I will hire." "No, mother dear, no, you cannot understand." "Do you wish for a bridegroom? The finest matchmaker I will hire." "Yes, mother dear, I confess, you truly understand."

4 CHIRI BIM (traditional) is a song full of laughter from the Chassidic tradition. The

great Rabbi performs mock miracles: he throws a magic spell so that Saturday is not acknowledged while he is on the road; he thunders to a pilgrim on crutches to throw away the crutches but the pilgrim falls flat on his face. Through it all runs the jolly refrain, chiri bim.

5 TUMBALALAIKA (traditional) is one of the most popular songs of laughter and love. "What can grow without rain, what can burn without end, what can cry without tears?" asks the boy of the girl. She answers, "A stone grows without rain, love burns without end, the heart cries without tears. Tumbalalaika." It is similar to the English ballad "I gave my love a cherry."

6 ROZHINKES MIT MANDLEN is a lullaby and the most beloved song by Abraham Goldfaden (1840-1908), the Russian Jewish writer and composer who created the Jewish musical theater with his folk operettas. A mother sings her child to sleep with promises of how well he will fare. When he grows up, raisins and almonds will be his.

7 DER REBBE ELIMELECH, words and music by Moshe Nadir (1885-1943) is in the Chassidic tradition. A Rabbi's mellowness increases as he is drinks wine. He calls in turn for his fiddlers, pipers, drummers and cymbal players, dancing to their music all the while.

8 ZOG MARAN, a poem by the American Jewish poet and short story writer, Avrom Reisen (1875-1953), set to a poignant folk-style melody by Samuel Bugatch (1898-1984) has become a folk song. It recalls the persecution by the Spanish Inquisition of the Marranos, or Jews who secretly kept their own religion and its rituals. "Say, Marrano, where will you celebrate Passover?" "In a little cave, and if they catch me, I will die with a song on my lips."

9 REIZELE by Mordecai Gebirtig (1877-1942) is the loveliest of love songs. "In a little street, in a house on the top floor, lives my dear Reizele. Every day I walk there, whistle, and call Reizele to come. Her sweet voice sounds, just walk around a little more, I will come, one, two, three. I walk along happily, she comes, and says to me, you must not whistle. Mother says it is not Jewish, one, two, three. I tell her I'll whistle no more, I will be the most pious of Jews, I will go every Saturday to the synagogue. She tells me she will embroider for me a little bag for the holy things, one, two, three. I stroll along happily and crack nuts. Come to me in my dream, Reizele, come, come, come."

10 LOMIR SICH IBERBETEN (traditional) is a sprightly and touching song of the aftermath of a marital quarrel. "Let's make up" says the wife, and offers her man tea with oranges, a dance, and even sheds tears, but the offer of her undying love finally turns the trick.

11 PARTIZANER is a thrilling and heroic song, the poem written in Poland by the fighting ghetto poet, Hirsh Glick (1922-1944), and the music by the Russian composer, Dimitri Pokrass. It was a product of the fierce and desperate fighting of the Jews in the Warsaw ghetto. "Don't say that you are going on your last journey, the freedom we sing for will come. A people sang the song with walls crashing about them and grenades in their hands. Our steps will proclaim that we are here."

12 TOG EIN, TOG EIS is from "Fiddler on the Roof," the 1964 award-winning musical, famous world-wide, which played on Broadway and was made into a motion picture. It was based on the stories by Sholom Aleichem (1859-1916) about Tevye the milkman and his family. The songs by Sheldon Harnick and Jerry Bock have become part of world Jewish folklore. This song is a version in Yiddish of "Sunrise, sunset," the great song of Tevye's reveries during which his daughter, Tzeitel, marries her beloved Motel. The song muses on the swift passing of time; Tevye asks "Where is the little girl I carried?" and answers it with "Sunrise, sunset"—time passes and she is now a woman, a bride.

13 The words of A VOLECHEL are those of an old Eastern European folksong, and the composer Hersh Wolowitz has written a tuneful but rueful Chassidic dancing song to it, using Ukrainian-Chassidic material. "You work all week and when the Sabbath comes, you have to borrow to set your table."

14 MARGARITKELECH, words and music by Zalman Shneour (1887-1959), is an enchanting song of love. The girl Chavele meets a lad in a field. He asks what she is looking for, and she says, daisies. He tells her that he has found the most beautiful daisy in the world, one with sapphire eyes. "And look how your golden hair mingles with my black locks, tra la la."

15 A DUDELE (traditional) is a dramatic setting of a song to the Lord of the Universe. "I will sing a song about Thee, Thee, Thee, Thee, Thee. Where I go, there is Thee. Where I stand, there is Thee. Wherever I turn—Thee."

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16 The words of DIE FROSH are by the celebrated American-Yiddish poet Yehoash (1872-1927) (composer unknown). It is an enchanting children's poem about a frog who goes courting, set to a sprightly folk-style melody. The poem is similar to the English nursery rhyme, "Froggie goes a' Courting;" the Yiddish song starts "There was a frog dressed in a green silk suit . . . " and tells of his adventures.

17 TUMBA TUMBA (traditional) is a song from old Russia, about a young girl sitting over the brick oven in the hut. A young man teasingly pulls at her thread. The refrain is, "Foolish boy, that will be an expensive joke. Now upon the oven we have two people, and they are not sewing, tumba, tumba."

18 CHASSENEH VALTZ is an adopted song, the music being a concert waltz by the Rumanian composer Josef Ivanovici (1845-1902), and the Yiddish words by Chaim Tauber (1901-1972). It has become a traditional "anniversary waltz" at Jewish weddings. "Come, dance with me our waltz from old times. We were two young hearts, full of love, innocent and pure. That blissful evening brought happiness to both of us, and in my heart still sounds our song, our waltz."

19 UNZER NIGUNDL, words and music by Nachum Sternheim (1879-1942) means "our little song." It says, "We know a little song, it is beautiful, grandmother and grandfather sang it when they were young, father and mother sang it when they were children, it is a song that everybody in the family sang when they were young, tra la la."

20 OIF'N PRIPETCHOK, a lullaby, was written by Mark Warshawsky (1848-1907) under Czarist rule just before the mass migrations to America; it became his most popular song. "On the little hearth a fire burns, the schoolroom is warm, the teacher tells of the birth of the 'Alef, beys(z),' or A B C's. Listen, children, but first you must read the ancient alphabet. Learn children, the alphabet will lead you to the holy books. Learn, children, happy is he who lives with knowledge. When you grow up, you'll know how full of tears is our alphabet. And if we are driven from this land of pain, may you find in our old alphabet the strength to re-build."

21 VIGLIED (Schlof mein Kind) is the famous lullaby published in 1892 by Sholom Aleichem (1859-1916), music by David Kavunovski, a song which was immensely popular in the mass migration years of East European Jews to America. "Sleep, my child, my

sweet comfort, my precious darling . . . Your mother sits beside your cradle in tears, your father is in America, a thousand miles away. We will join him there. I will be so happy. Until that good moment comes, sleep is such a comfort. Sleep my son, grow strong."

22 CHASSIDIC MELODY is a tune from Chassidic sources, set to later words by Nachem Sternheim (1879-1942). It tells of memories of old days. "Father and the children would sing chants together, grandmother would nod her head to the beat. O, what a delight. On Saturday, no one went to school. Father would come home from the synagogue, grandmother would give me a little pinch in the cheek, and say, you will grow up to be a scholar, O, what a delight. At night mother would stand at the window, deep in thought, grandmother would tell us stories, and tears like pearls would flow from the children's eyes. O, what a delight."

23 VEN ICH BIN A ROTHSCHILD is another Yiddish version of one of Harnick and Bock's songs from "Fiddler on the Roof," this known in English as "If I were a rich man." Tevye the father daydreams sadly and happily of how much he could do for his three daughters, their suitors, and all the poor people of the shtetl, if only he were a millionaire.

(The Omega Record Group, Inc. wishes to thank the Yivo Institute for Jewish Research for assistance in preparing these notes.)

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The six singers, three men and three women, who delivered this treasury of folk song, all lived with Jewish song almost from birth, expanded their talents to cover the glories of world music, became great favorites in the American music world, and exhibited the varied backgrounds and heritages that are part of the Jewish world today.

JAN PEERCE's (1904-1984) career, one of the most distinguished in modern opera, led him from the New York City synagogues where he sang as a child to the greatest opera houses in the world. For many years he was the leading tenor at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, and was the first operatic tenor to capture a new broad radio audience through the broadcasts under Toscanini of opera and oratorio. His interpretations of

repertoire from Glück to Verdi to the folksongs presented here gained him an enormous popular following.

Soprano **NETANIA DAVRATH** (1931-1987), a star of the Israel Opera, performed with Leonard Bernstein and Leopold Stokowski and with many of the major American and Israeli symphony orchestras and opera companies, including the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Boston Opera Company, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the Israel Philharmonic. She was born on the Russian-Polish border, and studied in Europe, Israel, and in New York. Folk song was second nature to her, for she grew up with Russian and Israeli song. Madame Davrath was beloved as a teacher in Israel.

The renowned **LEON LISHNER** is a leading bass in the United States and Canada. His 1991 performances of the role of Osmin in Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio* in Seattle mark the 50th anniversary of his debut in the role at Carnegie Hall in New York. He also has performed with the San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, New York City Opera, Seattle Opera, Central City Opera, Santa Fe Opera, and Vancouver Opera. Appearing in oratorio and concerts as well, he regularly tours from Alaska through Canada and the United States. He has been on the faculty of the University of Washington in Seattle.

MARTHA SCHLAMME (1923-1985) was born in Vienna and fled from the Nazis to England, where she established herself before becoming a star in the United States. Her diverse repertoire included *lieder*, opera, works by Kurt Weill, and folksongs of the world. She toured widely, and was admired especially for her compelling performances of the music of Kurt Weill.

HERSCHEL BERNARDI (1924-1986), the star of Broadway who replaced Zero Mostel in "Fiddler on the Roof," was at a young age part of New York City's Jewish Theater, in which his parents were prominent. Well-known in a diversity of roles, he appeared on the legitimate stage in such plays as "Death of a Salesman," in the motion picture industry, major network television, and radio.

The Israeli singer **SHOSHANA DAMARI** is beloved for her beautiful voice, marvelous acting ability, and compelling interpretations of folksongs, not only Yiddish and Israeli song, but folksongs from the world over. She has toured internationally to wide acclaim.

Recorded: Messrs. Peerce, Ellstein, July 1963; Miss Damari, June 1963; Mr. Bernardi, July 1960; Miss Davrath, Miss Schlamme, May 1962; Mr. Lishner, Jan. 1960; Messrs. Peerce, Golschmann, Nov. 1967

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—Seymour Solomon
Producer, Vanguard Classics

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VANGUARD CLASSICS

THE YIDDISH DREAM

A Heritage of Jewish Song

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AAD

1 **VU IS DUS GESELE —Where is the little street** 4:10
Jan Peerce* (Mills Music Inc., ASCAP)

2 **SHA, SHTIL—Hush, quiet** 3:53
Jan Peerce*
(Music: P. Jassinowsky; Metro Music, BMI)

3 **YOME, YOME** 1:47
Shoshana Damari**

4 **CHIRI BIM** 2:54
Herschel Bernardi

5 **TUMBALALAIKA** 2:15
Herschel Bernardi

6 **ROZHINKES MIT MANDLEN —Raisins with Almonds** 3:19
Netania Davrath‡ (A. Goldfaden)

7 **DER REBBE ELIMELECH —The Rabbi Elimelech** 2:20
Jan Peerce† (M. Nadir)

8 **ZOG MARAN—Tell me, Marrano** 3:04
Leon Lishner; Lazar Weiner, piano
(Reisen/Bugatch; Mills Music Inc., ASCAP)

9 **REIZELE** 5:01
Netania Davrath‡ (M. Gebirtig)

10 **LOMIR SICH IBERBETEN —Let's patch things up** 2:59
Martha Schlamme‡

11 **PARTIZANER** 2:40
Partisan song of the Warsaw Ghetto
Jan Peerce*
(H. Glick/D. Pokrass; Mills Music Inc., ASCAP)

12 **TOG EIN, TOG EIS—Sunrise, Sunset** 3:56
Jan Peerce† (from "Fiddler on the Roof")
(S. Harnick/J. Bock; Sunbeam Music, BMI)

13 **A VOLECHEL—A dance** 1:40
Leon Lishner; Lazar Weiner, piano
(H. Wolowitz; Society of Jewish Composers, BMI)

14 **MARGARITKELECH —Looking for daisies** 3:36
Martha Schlamme (Z. Shneour)

15 **A DUDELE—A song about Thee** 4:24
Netania Davrath‡

16 **DIE FROSH—The frog** 1:00
Leon Lishner; Lazar Weiner, piano (Yehoash)

17 **TUMBA TUMBA** 2:53
Martha Schlamme‡

18 **CHASSENEH VALTZ —Anniversary Waltz** 4:10
Jan Peerce*
(Tauber/Ivanovici; Music, PD, Lyrics, Metro Music, BMI)

19 **UNZER NIGUNDL—Our little song** 2:02
Netania Davrath‡ (N. Sternheim)

20 **OIF'N PRIPETCHOK —Sitting on the shelf above the stove** 5:07
Jan Peerce† (M. Warshawsky)

21 **VIGLIED—Sleep my child** 2:33
Leon Lishner; Lazar Weiner, piano
(S. Aleichem/D. Kavunovski)

22 **CHASSIDIC MELODY** 2:47
Netania Davrath‡ (N. Sternheim)

23 **VEN ICH BIN A ROTHSCHILD —If I were a rich man** 4:43
Jan Peerce† (from "Fiddler on the Roof")
(S. Harnick/J. Bock; Sunbeam Music, BMI)

TT: 76:51

Orchestra conducted by: *Abraham Ellstein
**Gershon Kingsley ‡Robert DeCormier
†Vladimir Golschmann

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VANGUARD CLASSICS

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[1] VU IS DUS GESELE* 4:10 [2] SHA, SHTIL* 3:53 [3] YOME, YOME** 1:47 [4] CHIRI BIM¤ 2:54 [5] TUMBALALAIKA¤ 2:15 [6] ROZHINKES MIT MANDLEN‡ 3:19 [7] DER REBBE ELIMELECH* 2:20 [8] ZOG MARAN*** 3:04 [9] REIZELE‡ 5:01 [10] LOMIR SICH IBERBETEN† 2:59 [11] PARTIZANER* 2:40

[12] TOG EIN, TOG EIS* 3:56 [13] A VOLECHEL*** 1:40 [14] MARGARITKELECH† 3:36 [15] A DUDELE‡ 4:24 [16] DIE FROSH*** 1:00 [17] TUMBA TUMBA† 2:53 [18] CHASSENEH VALTZ* 4:10 [19] UNZER NIGUNDL‡ 2:02 [20] OIF'N PRIPETCHOK* 5:07 [21] VIGLIED*** 2:33 [22] CHASSIDIC MELODY‡ 2:47 [23] VEN ICH BIN A ROTHSCHILD* 4:43

*JAN PEERCE **SHOSHANA DAMARI ***LEON LISHNER ¤HERSCHEL BERNARDI ‡NETANIA DAVRATH †MARTHA SCHLAMME

ADD

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